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U.S. Again Seeks Exchange Of Prisoners in Vietnam

The White House announced July 17 that the United States reiterates its desire to bring about an exchange of sick and wounded prisoners with the National Liberation Front and North Vietnam.

More than 20 American soldiers and several American civilians are believed held by the Viet Cong.

The White House said it is known that more than 160 American military personnel are confined in North Vietnam. Several more are considered missing because the Viet Cong and North Vietnam withhold the names of prisoners and generally prohibit most prisoners from sending letters.

"We are gravely concerned that some of these prisoners may not be treated humanely," the announcement noted.

Claims that American prisoners are treated humanely cannot be verified, the statement explained, because neutral observers or organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have not been allowed to visit the prisoners, and inspect their places of detention.

On the other hand it was pointed out that Viet Cong and North Vietnamese prisoners held by the Government are confined in camps inspected regularly by the ICRC. "Their treatment and the conditions of their confinement have been humane and in accord with the (Geneva) Convention as verified by these neutral observers."

Air Force Schedules A-37 Jets For Vietnam Test, Evaluation

The Air Force will send a squadron of A-37 jet aircraft to Vietnam this fall for test and evaluation. The Department of Defense, in making the announcement, said the 604th Air Commando Sq., recently activated at England AFB, La., will conduct the tests. Deployment of personnel and aircraft to Vietnam will be accomplished by Military Airlift Command aircraft.

The A-37 is a light-weight twin-engine, subsonic, low-wing ground attack aircraft designed for close air support of ground forces, interdiction and limited warfare.

FROM NAVY TO AIR FORCE—VAdm. Joseph M. Lyle, SC, USN, turns over the flag of the Defense Supply Agency to his successor, Lt. Gen. Earl C. Hedlund, at change-of-command ceremonies at DSA's Alexandria, Va., headquarters.

SecNav-Designate Killed In Mid-Air Plane Collision

Secretary of the Navy-designate John T. McNaughton died in a mid-air collision July 19 in North Carolina, while returning to Washington, D.C. from a vacation.

His wife, Sally, and son, Theodore, also died in the commercial airline crash.

In a statement issued shortly after the accident, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara said: "I am stunned by the tragic death of John T. McNaughton. All who knew him shared my respect for his courage, his integrity, and his devotion to his country. Our nation has lost a brilliant public servant. . . ."

McNaughton was Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs) and had been nominated by President Johnson to become Secretary of the Navy Aug. 1.

In announcing McNaughton's death by message to all Navy and Marine units, Acting Secretary of the Navy Robert H. B. Baldwin said: "He had a distinguished record of public service and would have brought great ability, integrity and imagination to the Department of the Navy. His loss will be deeply felt in the government."

Washington Memos

PREASSEMBLED CARGO loading, under "unitization plan" has begun at Sharpe Army Depot in coordination with Military Airlift Command, Travis AFB, Calif. Plan involves preparing cargo loads in accordance with aircraft schedules at Travis, so trucks arriving from Sharpe, near Stockton, will carry loads already palletized for available planes. Previously, loads had to be sorted and rehandled for shipment. Officials say plan could reduce layover time from as much as 48 hours to as little as one to three hours.

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION has issued progress report on two special programs to provide benefits counseling to servicemen in Vietnam and in stateside hospitals. Report shows VA counselors in Vietnam have advised more than 50,000 men in five months with some 10,000 receiving extra personal counseling. Hospital counseling service has contacted 13,500 men in 95 military hospitals.

BRIG. GEN. M. McD. Jones Jr., has assumed command of 1st Logistical Command's Saigon Support Command, which supplies all forces in Vietnam's III and IV corps areas. Gen. Jones previously was Project Manager, General Purpose Vehicle, Michigan Army Missile Plant, Warren, Mich. He relieved Col. Gilbert P. Levy, who will now head the U.S. Army Depot Command, Japan.

NEW RECORDS IN ammunition expended and total flying hours are claimed by "A" Flight, 4th Air Commando Squadron, Phu Cat, RVN. During 128 combat sorties flown in May, AC-47 Dragonships fired 951,871 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition and logged 535 total flying hours. Crews also dropped 2,468 flares in support of allied ground forces.

NATION'S NEWEST AND most completely automated oceanographic survey ship Discoverer is on expedition to a submerged mountain in the North Atlantic to investigate speed and direction of ocean currents, strange underwater waves, marine life migration, and mountain's effect on underwater course of Gulf Stream. Mountain is Gregg Seamount, which rises 13,320 feet from ocean floor to within 2,880 feet of surface. Expedition is being carried out by Coast and Geodetic Survey, division of Environmental Science Services Administration, Department of Commerce.

AIR FORCE Communications Service has announced its Tactical Communications Region with headquarters at Langley AFB, Va., will be elevated to AFCS Area level with two subordinate regions. Action will become effective about Aug. 8.

NASA'S LUNAR ORBITER Incentive Board has made a $1.05 million incentive award to Boeing Co., Seattle, for third Lunar Orbiter mission. Incentive Evaluation Board said quantity of photography of prime sites with respect to plans was major factor adversely affecting incentive results but that Orbiter III mission did produce pictures of high quality, properly exposed and with good positioning.

NAVAL SUPPLY SYSTEMS command gets new commander July 31 when RAdm. Bernhard H. Bieri Jr., relieves RAdm. H. J. Goldberg, who is retiring after 32 years of naval service. Adm. Bieri will also be Navy's Chief of Supply Corps. He was on CINCPACFLT staff as Fleet Supply Officer, and Force Supply Officer on staff of Commander, Service Force Pacific Fleet, when he received the new assignment.

USAF SELECTION BOARD for temporary major nominations convened at Randolph AFB, Tex., July 17, to consider about 1,605 eligible captains from the secondary zone. The board will nominate not more than 10 percent for further consideration by the Central Temporary Major Board, convening Aug. 16.

RADM. RICHARD B. LYNCH succeeded RAdm. William A. Sutherland as Commander, Hawaiian Sea Frontier; Commandant, 14th Naval District, and Commander, Pearl Harbor Naval Base, July 20. Admiral Lynch previously served as Chief, European Div., Joint Staff Office, JCS. Adm. Sutherland has been serving as interim commander since retirement of RAdm. H. S. Persons. He will continue to serve in his primary assignment, Commander, Fleet Air Hawaii.

AIR FORCE HAS requested proposals from nine companies for a pressurized, twin-engine, turbo-prop aircraft to replace some older piston-engined aircraft now being used for passenger/cargo transport. Designated CX, the craft will be capable of transporting 12 passengers or a like amount of cargo over range of 1,000 nautical miles.

MEMBERS OF PERUVIAN Air War College are scheduled to visit the U.S., Aug. 6-24 under the auspices of the Military Assistance Program. Itinerary includes visits to Air University, Air Force Academy, NORAD, MAC, AFLC, and Washington, D. C.

PRINCIPAL SPEAKER AT dedication of 1,500-man "Blanchard Barracks" at Bolling AFB, D.C., July 25 will be CMSgt. of the Air Force Paul W. Airey. Air Force and Navy enlisted men will begin moving into the nine-story dormitory in August. Also scheduled to attend dedication is Mrs. William H. Blanchard, widow of the former Air Force vice chief of staff in whose memory the building is named. Gen. Blanchard died in May 1966.

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DOD Assesses Capabilities Of U.S. Strategic Forces

The Department of Defense has given assurance that present United States strategic forces are capable of deterring a nuclear attack on this country by being unquestionably able to destroy the attacker in a retaliatory strike.

It was pointed out in a DOD statement that the United States has and will continue to have more than enough weapons to convince any enemy that an attack on this country would be suicidal.

"The improvements we are planning will ensure that we retain this capability indefinitely," the statement noted in answer to inquiries.

Concerning this country's capabilities and military applications, DOD said weapons decisions are made on the needs of the United States— considering national objectives and all relevant factors.

The statement explained that the U.S. "does not base its decisions simply on the ratio of number or megatonage of American weapons to the weapons of other countries."

Emphasizing a point, the statement continued, "It is most important to be clear that numbers of weapons and size of warheads alone are a very incomplete indicator of military strength.

"True military capability results from numbers of weapons that are accurate and reliable, that can survive an enemy attack and that can penetrate enemy defenses."

Navy, Air Force to Conduct Aleutian Seismic Experiment

Navy and Air Force will conduct an underwater seismic experiment this summer in the Aleutian Islands to refine data obtained from an underground nuclear test there in October 1965.

The test is part of the Department of Defense Vela Uniform program designed to develop techniques and improve capability in detecting, locating and identifying underground nuclear explosions.

Navy's Office of Naval Research and Air Force Technical Applications Center will detonate about 40 five-ton conventional explosives and one 2,000-ton conventional explosive.

The five-ton explosives will be detonated in mid-July at a depth of more than 600-feet along a line extending 1,100 miles southwest and 500 miles northeast of Amchitka Island. For the larger test, the liberty ship SS Robert L. Stevenson with a cargo of obsolete Navy explosives will be scuttled to 4,000 feet 32-miles from the island.

NEW "BIG E" SKIPPER—Navy Captain Kent L. Lee (left) relieves Capt. James L. Holloway III as commanding officer of the nuclear powered aircraft carrier USS Enterprise. The Enterprise recently returned from a tour in waters off Vietnam.

Military Astronauts Receive Distinguished Flying Cross

Navy and Air Force astronauts who completed space flights in NASA's manned-space flight program were honored July 13 in a ceremony at the Pentagon.

Decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross were nine Air Force officers, eight Navy officers and one Marine Corps officer. The decorations were presented by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. David L. McDonald and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. McConnell.

Fifteen of the astronauts attended the ceremony, along with Mrs. Edward White, who accepted the award for her husband, who died with Lt. Col. Virgil Grissom and Navy Lcdr. Roger Chaffee in a space capsule fire on the launching pad at Cape Kennedy earlier this year.

Mrs. Grissom and retired Marine Col. John Glenn Jr., the nation's first man to orbit the earth, did not attend.

Four of the Navy men and three from the Air Force received gold stars in lieu of second and third awards of the DFC. They were: Capts. Walter M. Shirra and James A. Lovell Jr., Col. L. Gordon Cooper, Cdrs. John Young and Charles Conrad Jr., and Lt. Cols. Virgil I. Grissom and Thomas Stafford.

Receiving DFCs for single missions into space were: Capt. Alan B. Shepard Jr., Col. Frank Borman, Col. Glenn, Cdrs. M. Scott Carpenter, Eugene A. Cernan and Richard F. Gordon Jr., and Lt. Cols. James A. McDivitt, Edward H. White, David Scott, Michael Collins and Edwin Aldrin.

Army Cautions Personnel On Dependent Parents' Use of Civilian Medicare

Army has cautioned its personnel to be sure they are well-informed in matters pertaining to medical care for dependent parents or parents-in-law.

Army's communication to commanders noted several recent instances in which dependent parents or parents-in-law presented identification at civilian medical institutions and received care under the civilian medicare program.

The communication points out that such services are not authorized at government expense. Officials said dependent parents or parents-in-law are authorized medical care only at uniformed services facilities, provided such services are available.

Army asked commanders to insure each individual knows proper channels for obtaining dependent medical care, stressing that, in cases of improper application, either the individual treated or the military sponsor is financially responsible.

AF Air Controllers Log 77 Aircraft 'Saves'

Air traffic controllers of the Air Force Communications Service have official credit for saving 77 "in flight" accidents for the first six months of 1967. Incidents in Vietnam totaled 12.

Aircraft involved for the reporting period totaled 62 military and 15 civilian. There were 141 persons aboard the planes involved and military aircraft were valued at more than $86 million. No monetary value was placed on civilian aircraft. They ranged from a Boeing 707 to light craft.

In the six-year history of AFCS, the command's air traffic controllers have been credited with 783 saves involving 2,179 persons. The value of the military aircraft over this period is listed as over $710 million.

GETTING ORIENTED—Army Maj. Gen. Shelton E. Lollis, CG, 1st Logistical Command in Vietnam, briefs Lt. Gen. F. T. Unger, CG, Ryukyu Islands, on the area covered by his 60,000-man command. Gen. Unger was on an orientation tour of Vietnam.

Navy Establishes New Communications Command

A Naval Communications Command became operational July 1 following a major reorganization of the Office of Naval Communications.

RAdm. Robert H. Weeks was assigned Commander, Naval Communications Command in addition to his present duties as Asst. Chief of Naval Operations (Communications)/Director of Naval Communications.

Admiral Weeks assumed command of all shore activities formerly under coordination control of the Asst. Chief of Naval Operations (Communications), with the responsibility for their primary support. He is also responsible for providing the communication and cryptologic needs of all ships and shore activities.

The new command will be primarily concerned with the day-to-day operations of the Navy's communication and cryptologic facilities.

Tasks performed by the Command include those previously assigned to Naval Communication Systems Hdqs., Bailey's Crossroads, Va., and to Naval Security Group Hdqs. and the Naval Radio Frequency Spectrum Activity, both at the Naval Security Station, Washington, D.C.

Army Issues 'Most Wanted' Warrant Officer List

Army is continuing its efforts to fill critical shortages in its warrant officer structure. The latest procurement circular, DA-601-13, notes shortages in 35 MOS, of which nine skills are currently "most wanted."

Heading the list of critical shortages are helicopter pilots and small boat operators.

To meet shortages, Army has modified its procurement program so that reserve warrant officers holding any MOS on the list may apply for active duty and enlisted personnel who possess required qualifications may apply for appointment as W-1, with concurrent call to active duty. The circular also authorizes retired warrant officers to apply for active duty and provides for granting waivers on maximum age and service limitations. No one over age 35 is eligible without a waiver.

Standards have been cut and application processing procedures streamlined to fill as many skills as possible. Normally, only applicants who scored 110 or better on the GT test were considered. Applications of men obtaining scores as low as 105 are now being considered for men in the nine most needed skills.

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